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May, 1859.



FAREWELL

TO

PITTSBURG

AND THE

MOUNTAINS.

REMARKS ON THE SCENERY:

DESCRIPTION OF THE DIFFICULTIES SURMOUNTED

BY EMIGRANTS.

Interspersed with Reflections

POLITICAL, PRUDENTIAL AND MORAL;

And exactly calculated for those whom it may fit.

A POEM, BY J. W.

PHILADELPHIA:

PRINTED FOR THE AUTHOR,

By Joseph Rakestraw.

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1818.

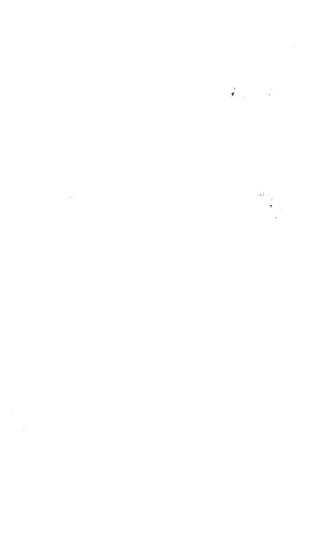
TO THE INHABITANTS OF THE CITY OF PITTSBURG AND ITS VICINITY:

Friends and fellow Citizens;

I HAVE resided among you for more than twenty-one years, attending to that business to which I was regularly brought up; not from choice, but necessity. This necessity was to procure support for myself and my beloved family, of which you are not ignorant. I have left, deposited among you, to myself at least, three precious relicks, besides branches planted from the original stock, which I hope, will take root and flourish, in usefulness and respectability. Being called with my family, to remove to the eastern part of this State, at a season when the roads were unfavourable; being fond of exercise, possessing health, and not being limitted as to time, we concluded to engage a waggon for our luggage, and to admit of seats for the females when disposed to ride, which was seldom the case. We crossed every mountain on foot, amusing ourselves with the scenery, &c. and while descending the last my daughters requested me to write a farewell piece, as they were pleased to term it, to Pittsburg and to the mountains, with which request I have complied, and dedicated it to you. I have not done this, because I conceived it to possess intrinsic merit, for I am conscious it will not stand the test of criticism; but as a small token of my sincere regard for many of your citizens, and my good wishes for the happiness and rational prosperity of you all. The piece is short, and for want of something more important, it may afford amusement, if not instruction; at all events. it can do no harm.

With sentiments of esteem,

I am Yours, &c.



FAREWELL

TO

Pittsburg and the Mountains.

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NEGLECTED muse, assist my humble theme, To sing of PITTSBURG, and the road we came: To please my Girls, for 'tis at their request,' I court thy aid, a substitute for rest. To take a last farewell, of those we love; Our cottage, garden, and that little grove, Planted at her request, whom we revere, It swells the breast, and urges forth a tear. Farewell thou peaceful cot, beneath thy shade, Oft, have we sweetly sung, and humbly pray'd. That parlour too, where pious Cooper stood,* To point his little flock, the way to God-Excite their hopes, to calm their anxious fears, Assist to wipe away their falling tears.

^{*} Mr. Thomas Cooper, who led a Class of religious friends, for several years, in the back parlour.

Not tears luxuriant, which from love divine, So frequent flow, and cause the face to shine; But those which from the humble mind oppress'd' When sick of sin, is seeking after rest. To fix the labouring mind on things above, He oft would urge this truth, that God is love. Adieu, that garden, where we oft did cull, For mental food, and fruit as oft did pull. Where lilach's flourish, blushing roses stand, Or peep above the grass, on either hand: Where busy bees, and humming birds regale, And chippers pick, and tell their little tale. Here grassy banks, array'd in lively green, And sloping paths are introduc'd between: With privet hedges, and sweet-scented flowers, Inviting spot, to spend our leisure hours. Adieu, thou sweet retreat, we shall no more Ascend thy banks, or thy neat paths explore. And thou Grant's hill, whose surface we have trod, To view the city, and that house of God, At whose firm base, my much lov'd Mary lies,

Wife of my youth, and partner of my joys. And my dear Ann, with our sweet infant too, A threefold cord, which binds me fast to you: Should heav'n, auspicious, grant me my request, With you, in death, my weary limbs shall rest: But if in distant clime, my grave must be, I shall in bliss, your lovely spirits see. Farewell that sacred desk, where oft I stood, To warn the wicked, and to cheer the good: To tell of HIM, whom men of wisdom fear, And not unfrequent, with a falling tear. Adieu, ye friends, with whom I oft did join, To sing the praise of God, in hymns divine; May ye with joyful hope, hold on your way, And steadfast faith, obtain eternal day. Ye lofty hills, which guard the city round, Where once, untutor'd savages were found, Lords of the soil, and masters of the game; By cautious steps, and rifles deadly aim. Beneath your surface, hid from mortal eye. Rich mines of coal, as in a store-house lie:

And men with murky visage, oft explore, Your dark recesses for a winter's store-To warm our dwellings, and to gain their bread, 'Tis better thus, than supperless to bed; 'Tis better far, that men with honest toil, Subsistence gain, than cunningly beguile; More honour is, to honest labourer due, Than all the sordid speculating crew, Who like the prowling wolf in quest of prey, Seize all the game, and bear the prize away. Two noble rivers, which united here, Form the Ohio, or La Belle rivere,* More rapid one, with islands scatter'd o'er, The other, sluggish, creeps along the shore. The first transparent flows o'er pebbl'd bed, The other muddy, chiefly from its head, These streams conjoin'd, are as distinctly seen, As if a firm partition ran between: When Alleghany flows its rolling tide, Monongahela shrinks to southern side.

^{*} The beautiful river.

The former pressing, while the last impress'd, Recedes, and opens wide its yielding breast; Yet both retain for miles, their own estate, Till urged by ripplings, to amalgamate. Between these rivers, Pittsburg city stands, Focus, where strangers meet, in quest of lands: Thence soon diverging, spread the forest o'er, Or fix their station, nigh some river shore. Here furnaces, emitting flames of fire, And clouds of smoke o'er top the city spire; With noisy engines puffing out their steam, For uses varied, which we need not name. These all evince, what Pittsburg soon will be, The seat of useful manufactory, If properly conducted, and the aid Of laws, by prudent legislators made, And executed too, for 'tis in vain, To make good laws, and break such laws again: 'Tis like a useful artist, first he tries To make good needles, then break off their eyes. This hint may suit Columbia, but the child

Is by indulgence, ricketed and spoil'd;—
It will for liberty vociferate,
But spurn at laws of union or of state,
Unless they suit its whim, or private trade,
Then laws are good, what ever laws are made.
Yon busy strands, where sturdy barge-men meet,
And merchants, more polite, each other greet;
And strangers too, who oft assemble here,
With scanty funds, and minds oppress'd with
care.

In want of aid, a friend they often find,
In Holdship's busy hands, and feeling mind,*
Who, spite of envy, with its iron tongue,
Of foulest calumny, he will e'er long,
Acquire a competency, for his toil,
And all the onsets of their malice foil;
A cup of water, or a piece of bread,
Bestow'd in love, to cheer the drooping head,

^{*} II. Holdship, who is ever ready to assist those in distress, and particularly strangers. He has had many enemies, but seems to outlive them all.

Of such as need it, or affording aid, To those who thro' affliction's furnace wade, Admits reflection, while the God of love, Will recompense the donor from above. You sloping paths, up which the active stray, Where rocks unnumber'd in profusion lay, In rude magnificence, projecting o'er The broken vale, and rivers bending shore. When roaming high, beneath the leafy shade, Of stunted oaks, where humble plow or spade Would useless be, to turn the scanty soil, We stopp'd to view the dripping rock awhile, And catch its falling drops, in open hand, And sip the cold collection as we stand; Then downward haste, on recreation bent, And slide from tree to tree the steep descent; Unless projecting rock, obstruct the way, Or fallen tree, induce a short delay, By friendly twigs, with cautious steps and slow, We down proceed, and gain the vale below. Up Belen's run, there flows a small cascade,

Not formed by art, but one which nature made;
Deep in a glen, o'er hung with lofty trees,
Secure from scorching ray, or upland breeze.
Here, lost in admiration, have we stood,
Nigh ravines deeply cut, with sweeping flood;
Or scatter'd rocks, by some convulsion torn,
Or mouldering trees, prostrated by the storm;
To view, prospectively, this little vale,
When taste, o'er rugged nature shall prevail.

We bend our course now o'er those hills and vales,

Where emigrants in crowds, the eye assails;
Of various nations, sects, and colours too,
Europa's sons, with Africans and Jew.
The keen-eyed Yankey too, with carriage trim,
And well fed oxen, straining every limb,
To drag the pond'rous load, through mud and
clay,

O'er rocks and hills, which stand athwart the way. In crowds, the Germans too, of Swabian race, Whose grotesque figure, and whose ruddy face, Oft times excite involuntary smiles, And not less oft, the tedious way beguiles: These all united, male and female too, Both old and young, to drag the waggon through The deep sunk rut, with females in the rear, Thrusting with all their might, the rut to clear; While one with voice vociferous and strong, And free-used whip, to urge the beasts along; Succeed at length, the wish'd for spot to gain. And rest awhile, from anxious toil and pain. A lesson this, to men of useful lore, Who seek for office, honour, wealth and power; Would they unite, to seek their country's good, As honest Germans do, to drag their load; We should have roads, that would our steps beguile, And all this barren wilderness would smile. A son of Ham, of African descent, A smart tonsure, on emigration bent;

Comes next with razors, and his printed bag:

His sooty can, and not less sooty rag; To wipe his razors, or his client's face, Least wanting this, his business he'd disgrace. Progressing on, attractions soon he finds, Mid' groups of faces, beards of various kinds, And colours too, on visage plump or thin, Or black, or white, 'tis all alike to him. The bargain struck, a log, and not a chair, Serves him to shave on, or for cutting hair, With lather cold, and rough edg'd razor, he Drags up the beard and sets the sufferer free. Such varied scenes, present themselves to view, For skilful Poets, and for Painters too; A field for them, in each respective art, But such as Poetasters, don't impart. Had I, Hogarth, thy pencil and thy skill, I'd soon a sheet of yellow canvas fill, In one extended view, I would pourtray, The various groups of strangers on their way To lands unknown, by various motives press'd, Some, seeking riches, others, only rest.

Some fleeing from the tyranny of man,
Others, from debt; a much frequented plan.
I'd terminate that view, with steep ascent,
Up some high mountain side, where nearly spent
The weary travellers, hard press'd with care,
Some fast in mud, nigh rugged rocks, and bare:
Others more fort'nate, the top had gain'd,
Wiping their face, with perspiration stain'd;
Then take a last, a retrospective view,
Of distant mountains pass'd, and vales got
through.

Could I, as Bloomfield did, minutely write,
And place in rhyme, what now, I would indite,
In social bands, I'd place throughout the way,
Strangers encamp'd, and horses run astray:
Or careless browsing, mid' the shady trees,
Glad to regale, or ramble at their ease:
Waggons upset, or deeply sunk in mud,
Wheels horizontal, and a prostrate load;
While friendly waggoners reflecting stand,
With manly efforts, like the spartan band.

To raise the waggon, or, remove the load, And gain good footing, on the firmer road. Three blooming females, too, in lively green* Of bombazet, and not of bombazeen, From useful fleece, which on the sheep did grow, Both slip and bonnet, more for use than show. These, with a silken bag, each had in hand, To hold a 'kirchief, needle, thread or band. For needful use, a use which oft will be, When roving past a thorny bush, or tree, To cull wild berries, from the mountain side, Or gain that footing, which the mud deni'd. A sprightly youth, too, verging on sixteen,† With costume light, and colour somewhat green, Lightly meandering, or skipping o'er Some jutting rock, the mountain to explore: Or in close converse with his vener'd sire, Pointing the track, to shun the green quagmire. Next faithful King, whose comprehensive mind,

^{\$} A person who had lived with the author a number of years.

Lies hid as diamonds, ere they are refin'd; Who sees effects from causes far remote, And checks ambition's first aspiring thought. With nervous hand, he grasps the waggon bed, Least some huge rock, with its projecting head, Or deep sunk rut, should turn the waggon o'er, And thus lay prostrate, our collected store. The danger past, with solemn steps and slow, He bends his course, where 'ere the waggons go: Mean while, his mind unfetter'd, oft will soar, O'er nature's works, and nature's God adore. Progressing slowly o'er the hills and vales, Where foaming torrents, oft the eye assails: Mid' rocks, on rocks, successively upborne, Whose rugged sides, resist the pelting storm. O'er mountains too, where oft we view'd the sun Burst through the clouds, and chase the chilly gloom;

The crystal dews, fast dripping from the trees, And spider's hoary web, with gentle breeze, Floating in air, while o'er the humble vale, The fleecy clouds, in wide extent prevail: Like some vast lake, by mountain sides confin'd, And scatter'd islands, variously combined, In sportive fancy, till the solar ray, Exhale the mists, and chase the scene away. Adieu, ye pleasing scenes, and lofty pines, Ye waving forests, interspers'd with vines-Ye gloomy vales, where rapid streamlets flow, And paths where strangers travel, fill'd with wo. Ye all are pass'd, while Cumberland—proud vale. With scatter'd farms, at once the eyes assail; And orchards too, with mellow fruit in store, Mills grinding apples, presses running o'er, With luscious cider, grateful hearts to cheer, And lend its aid, to crown the closing year. Still further on, old Susquehanna flows, Expanding wider, as she shorter grows; And on her surface, beautious isles are seen, In couplets oft, and once a third between, But far remote, and promontories too, With bending shores, which terminate the view.

Unless some distant mountain should intrude, And raise its head, magnificiently rude, To form a contrast, and complete the whole. And raise emotions, grateful in the soul. Her stately bridges, distant far apart, Merit some notice from poetic art: That from Columbia, near a mile in length, Neat, in its structure, but respecting strength, Perhaps too weak, to stem a rapid flood, When gorg'd with cakes of ice, or floating wood. This, time will shew, which test the artist's skill, Criterion this to lay suspicion still. The next, at Harrisburg, where men of lore, New laws to make, or old ones to explore; In conclave meet, for Pennsylvania's good, In building bridges, or to mend the road; Thus easing travellers of half their toil, And aid them much, when seeking richer soil. These bridges then, for there in fact are two, Not like the brigs of Ayr, both old and new,*

^{*} See Burns's poems.

These in succession, aid the traveller o'er,

First to an island, then the western shore:

We'll call them twins, for such they seem design'd,

Conceiv'd at once, in the projector's mind: With firm abutments, nor less firm the piers, Such as might stem the flood, for many years, Unless stern winter, suddenly assail'd By sage Vertumnus, who at length prevail'd,* To force its frigid power, and break its chain, Aided by sudden deluges of rain; Vast in extent sweeping the mountain side, Of sturdy oaks, with limbs extended wide; Rushing with fury, uncontrol'd below, Driving vast fields of ice, and melting snow; With urging force, impetuous and strong; O'erwhelm the piers, and float the bridge along. Then would our artists, as in former years, Select out massier rocks, to form their piers:

^{*} God of the spring.

And Legislators, from experience, grown More wise, and less to empty spouting prone: As in a focus, all their powers unite, To spread contentment, and of course, delight: By building bridges solid, turnpikes too, More useful here, than goldmines of Peru: To check ambitious views, nor speculate On treasures of the union, or the state; But by example, teach that honest toil, Like Cincinnatus, turning o'er the soil, With plough, or spade; a practice better far, Than lust of gain, the origin of war. Our hardy sons, by such examples taught, Will check the risings of each vicious thought, Will tend the plough, and make the forest ring, With sturdy axe, and their just praises sing. The rattling turnpike, and the busy stage, With grinding wheels, at length the thoughts engage:

We take our station, leaving far behind, The plodding waggons, as at first design'd-

And speed our way, by prancing horses drawn, To that fam'd city, which of late has shown, On page of history, a refuge for Europa's sons, from desolating war. Where law perverted, by imposing fines On talents, and on independent minds: That see the evil, which ambition brings, By Borough-mongers, and tyrannic Kings, Whose fell ambition, with its galling chain, Would bind those intelects they can't restrain; And grind the poor, by taxes multipli'd, For feeding tyrants, and supporting pride. Since man is man, and none on earth is more, Shall tyrant man, oppress the honest poor? No! Heav'n auspicious, with its wonted care, Will catch the tyrant, in his wily snare, Blast his vain hopes, thus, to perpetuate, His power usurp'd, though term'd legitimate. Said we usurp'd? we usurpation dread, And wish to be explicit on this head: By usurpation then, 'tis this we mean,

Unlawful power assum'd, what 'ere its name: A power, extorting from the honest poor, Their scanty pittance, painful to endure, And drag them forth, to labour and to toil, To fight their battles, not partake the spoil. Heav'n will ere long, on such devoted heads, Hurl forth those darts, the pompous tyrant dreads: Destroy his offspring, and without a name, Leave him a blank in nature, not in fame. Were kings but nursing fathers, and the great Employ the surplus of their vast estate, To feed the hungery, assist the poor, (And shut to fawning sycophants, their door.) Encourage virtue, to the afflicted kind, Relieve the sick, be eyes unto the blind: The gloom which hangs the splendid court around. And in the stately palace, oft is found, Would dissipate, and vulture ennui, The scourge of pride, and indolence, would flee: Sweet peace would hover, with its balmy wing, Would soothe the mind, and consolation bring.

But why my muse art thou so wont to stray 'Mid stately courtiers, tyrants of the day? Will Philadelphia, no research afford, To point thy dart, or exercise the sword Of honest truth, so little understood, By those who ought to seek the public good? 'Tis paradoxical, to say the least, For men of sense, to trifle and to feast Away their time, since this great city round, And in its bosom, various haunts are found, Corrupting youth, and leading them astray From virtue, and that humble steady way, That way of peace, by virtuous minds possess'd, Where man, immortal, can with safety rest. Ask not, vain youth, the cause of this my song, Let conscience speak, 'twill speak unasked ere

'Tis muzzel'd now, by lustful passions lead, And prostrate reason, scarce can raise its head. Ye! more advanc'd in vice, than yet in age, Whose beastly passions, awfully presage.

long;

A life pestiferous, which in its train Drags thousands on, to infamy and pain. Have you a voice within, or is it dead? So oft neglected, it perhaps is fled To more congenial clime, and waits that hour, When death shall place you fully in its power! Then, O, alas! straight to its victim flies, This long neglected worm, that never dies. Reflect on this, and ere your course is run, Forsake your sins, repent and kiss the son: Enthron'd in mercy, he your voice will hear, And wipe away your sad repentant tear. The plodding merchant, with his busy train Of clerks, and brokers lusting after gain, With cunning lawyers, bankers not a few, And misers shaving close, a motley crew: These, all engag'd, as they of right should be, To gain subsistence for their progeny; If such they have, if not, the fault is theirs, As heaven, with some exceptions, form'd them pairs,

That every man might have one lawful wife,

And live contented, free from guile and strife. 'Mid these, no doubt, we shall exceptions find, All are not fools, though nearly all pur-blind. Else, why the mind absorb'd, and God no share? As if in worldly good, true peace was there. Why trample on the precious law of God? Since human life, is subject to his nod: Else, why not listen to that voice within? Ere it is sear'd by folly, and by sin: And why neglect their rising progeny, To form the twig, ere it becomes a tree? Since from that stock, a rod, or fatal dart, Might them chastise, or deeply wound their heart. In early infancy, parental skill Is needed most, to regulate the will, And form the mind, so much to error prone, Least passion uncontrol'd, usurp the throne; Least from those passions consequences flow, In nature wicked, and replete with woe. Ask you what course a parent should pursue? Let common sense dictate that course to you. She says, 'tis this—their appetites controul,

And truth instill, which dignifies the soul. What ere is right, and needful to be done, Teach them that right to do, and not to shun, By cunning pretexts, youthful minds invent, Of which, when more mature, they oft repent: Give them employment, suited to their age. 'Tis needful this, and oft a good presage Of future excellence, and useful life, And guards at once from ennui and strife. You give your offspring food, you give them more, Raiment, tuition, with perhaps a score Of minor tactics, useless and severe, That they may be polite, but not sincere; To fit them for a party, or a play, Or foolishly to chat their time away. When Miss Flertilla calls, whose flippant tongue Has caus'd dissention, or some rival stung: Or what is worse, contriving to instill, Improper sentiments, producing ill. Or Madam Modish, in her coach and pair, Her tip-toe movements, or her stately air. To tell of wonders, in her circle gav,

Of who was at the party, or the play:
Or throw a dart, from envy's quiver drawn,
To wound fair virtue, on her humble throne.
But virtue sits unmov'd, nor does she fear
The dire effects, of Miss Flertilla's sneer;
Or Madam Modish, whose envenom'd tongue,
Has peals of slander, round her circle rung.
From such examples, such results must flow,
As make the term of life, a scene of woe:
Change then your course, nor let Flertilla's sneer,
Or Madam Modish check your new career
Of useful life, your offspring then will see,
Your mind from turmoil and distraction free.

Ye fair associates of conjugal life,
Want you examples of that honour'd strife,
In doing good? see, Page is at the door,*
Or Cook, or Steel, and many females more:
Waiting to enter, where the afflicted lie,
To feed, or to console them ere they die.

^{*} Three ladies of this city, who spend part of their leisure, in visiting the sick and afflicted.

To point the hungry to that gospel feast, That feast of love, which suits the sinner best: To tell of HIM, whose sacrifice procur'd Sweet peace for them, for he their curse endur'd: Compar'd with this, your parties and your balls, Your costly equipage, and noisy halls, Where cards, and calumny, alternate find, A task too hard to fill your vacant mind. Vacant, because in you no place is found For HIM, who doth your wayward paths surround. Compar'd with this, the mind so apt to chuse The shadow, while the substance you refuse; And dread the season, when that mind forlorn, Is left a prey, by sad reflection torn. Compar'd with this, your life a blank has been, Or, what is worse, a fluctuating scene, Of dire events, where disappointment reigns, And passion, binding reason fast in chains. Imports it naught, that life is as a dream, A fleeting shadow, or a flowing stream, Which passes swiftly, but returns no more, From that unfathom'd sea, without a shore?

Or, is it of no consequence to you, That bliss, eternal bliss, should heave in view, When life recedes, and transient scenes are fled? That Jesus should support your drooping head? Support your offspring too, and point that way Of humble love, which leads to endless day. Imports it naught, that you a mind possess, Calm, and serenely fill'd with joy and peace? Your offspring too, by your prudential care, Induc'd to shun the world's bewitching snare— To bless the day when first they drew their breath, And taught by you, to shun the paths of death: Are these events beneath maternal care? Or, caught are you, in folly's baneful snare? The dupe of fashion, vanity and pride, And not one faithful friend your steps to guide? While souls immortal, in a minor state, By you enliven'd, and whose very fate, With some restrictions, on yourself depends, For bliss complete, or woe, which never ends: Reflect on this, 'tis wisdom thus to do; Reflection must precede, if peace ensue:

Through this, with active faith, we wiser grow. We foil the efforts of a wiley foe, Whose weapons vary, and at whose command. Legions unite, and desolate the land-Legions, led on by fashion and by pride, Which throng the path of life, both far and wide: In every form deception can suggest, But guis'd with truth, this suits the tempter best: Sometimes by art, and innocency clad,* The bait succeeds, the wiley foe is glad, And conscience sleeps, now unpolite is grown, And therefore, no regard to it is shown: Till rous'd by sickness, or declining years, Then conscience wakes, delusion disappears, And retrospection fills the mind with dread, For mercies slighted, wasted moments fled: Or when intemperance, with Momus' grin, Affected mirth without, but none within: Within, was by conflicting passions torn, A prey to guilt, and folly's rankling thorn;

[•] Those for whom this is intended, will recollect that sophistical argument, "No harm in an innocent game at cards!"

Which rankled still, yet this was all in vain, For passion urg'd, and conscience soon was slain: Amaz'd at this sad retrospective view, The troubled conscience stings the soul anew; Around for help she looks, but looks in vain, Offers rejected, sting the soul again; No ray of hope, from this vain world appears, To soothe the mind, or wipe the flowing tears. Reflect on this, to this reflection's due, And flee to HIM for aid, who died for you; He will returning Prodigals receive, When sick of sin, they steadfastly believe, And then obey. 'Tis faith which works by love, That fits the soul to taste the joys above :-That heals the deadly wound, which sin had giv'n,

And opens in the breast a constant heav'n.

J. W.

Philad. July 1, 1818.





